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**From:** Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman  
**Sent:** Tue 12/26/2017 1:18:48 PM  
**Subject:** POLITICO Playbook, presented by Google Year in Search 2017: U.K. GOV'T pleads with Prince Harry: Don't invite Obama to your wedding, because Trump will be upset -- TRUMP's hidden Cabinet -- IMPEACHMENT debate divides Dems -- DAVID BROOKS' Sidney Awards

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Today's POLITICO Playbook presented by Google Year in Search 2017

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## Driving the Day

**TOP TALKER -- HEADLINE IN U.K.'S THE SUN: "TRUMP SNUB FEAR:**Government pleads with Prince Harry not to invite Barack Obama to his wedding," by Tom Newton Dunn: "GOVERNMENT mandarins are urging Prince Harry not to invite the Obamas to his wedding for fear of infuriating Donald Trump. Harry and fiancée Meghan Markle have told aides they want the former U.S. president and wife Michelle at their big day on May 19.

"**The 33-year-old prince has become good friends** with the Obamas since bonding with them during the Invictus Games. But Britain's relations with Trump's White House have sunk to their lowest ebb since his election last year. The property billionaire does not hide his loathing of Mr. Obama and is expected to be enraged if his predecessor gets the coveted call up when he won't. The young Royal couple's dislike of the new president is well known. ...

"**There are deep fears among senior Foreign Office and No10** officials that another perceived national snub will make it impossible for Theresa May to meaningfully engage with Trump. A senior government source said: 'Harry has made it clear he wants the Obamas at the wedding, so it's causing a lot of nervousness. Trump could react very badly if the Obamas get to a Royal wedding before he has had a chance to meet the Queen.'" <http://bit.ly/2zvCC38>

**Happy Tuesday. PLAYBOOK YEAR IN REVIEW:** Today's audio briefing features a bonus episode of Anna, Jake and Zach talking about the recent wave of sexual misconduct allegations against prominent D.C. figures and how the political world is reacting to them <http://bit.ly/2pwfQIG> ... **ICYMI:** On Monday, we talked about how the investigation of Russia's influence in the 2016 election has unfolded and how the White

House has responded <http://bit.ly/2pE337k>

## WHAT TRUMP LIKES TO READ ...

-- **"Retailers Feel Shoppers' Christmas Cheer,"** by WSJ's Suzanne Kapner: "Fueled by high consumer confidence and a robust job market, U.S. retail sales in the holiday period rose at their best pace since 2011, according to Mastercard SpendingPulse, which tracks both online and in-store spending. Sales, excluding automobiles, rose 4.9% from Nov. 1 through Christmas Eve, compared with a 3.7% gain in the same period last year, according to the Mastercard Inc. unit, which tracks all forms of payment. E-commerce continued to drive the gains, rising 18.1%."  
<http://on.wsj.com/2zw6fkZ>

-- **AP: "U.S. says it negotiated \$285M cut in United Nations budget":** "The U.S. Mission to the United Nations said on Sunday that the U.N.'s 2018-2019 budget would be slashed by over \$285 million. The mission said reductions would also be made to the U.N.'s management and support functions." <http://bit.ly/2DS4FgN>

**LIVE FROM MAR-A-LAGO ... @realDonaldTrump** at 6:58 a.m.: "Based on the fact that the very unfair and unpopular Individual Mandate has been terminated as part of our Tax Cut Bill, which essentially Repeals (over time) ObamaCare, the Democrats & Republicans will eventually come together and develop a great new HealthCare plan!"  
... **at 6:33 p.m.:** "I hope everyone is having a great Christmas, then tomorrow it's back to work in order to Make America Great Again (which is happening faster than anyone anticipated)!"

**THE PRESIDENT** has nothing on his public schedule today.

**TIP OF THE SPEAR -- NYT'S DANNY HAKIM and WILLIAM RASHBAUM: "New York's Attorney General in Battle With Trump":** "By moving to sue the Federal Communications Commission over net neutrality this month, [New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman's] office took its 100th legal or administrative action against the Trump administration and congressional Republicans. His lawyers have challenged Mr. Trump's first, second and third travel bans and sued over such diverse matters as a rollback in birth control coverage and a weakening of pollution standards. They have also unleashed a flurry of amicus briefs and formal letters, often with other Democratic attorneys general, assailing legislation they see as gutting consumer finance protections or civil rights.

**"In Mr. Schneiderman's seventh year as attorney general,** the office has been transformed into a bulwark of resistance amid an unusually expansive level of confrontation with the federal government. Other Democratic state attorneys general are undertaking similar efforts, often in concert, like Xavier Becerra in California, where extra money was set aside in the budget for the attorney general to battle the Trump administration.

**"How far Mr. Schneiderman is willing to go** in taking on Mr. Trump could define his political career, particularly in a blue state where disapproval of the president is high. The attorney general's office potential for troublemaking and generating national headlines was redefined in the early 2000s by Eliot Spitzer. Mr. Schneiderman is a less combative man who was often the target of Mr. Trump's Twitter wrath amid a three-year civil investigation into Trump University. In the end, Mr. Schneiderman's office extracted a \$25 million settlement in the case." <http://nyti.ms/2l02yPR>

## **THE YEAR-END REPORT CARDS ...**

-- **"President Trump Spent Nearly One-Third of First Year in Office at Trump-Owned Properties,"** by WSJ's Rebecca Ballhaus: "President Donald Trump, who is currently spending a 10-day Christmas vacation at the Florida luxury resort he owns, has visited one of his company's properties on nearly one-third of the days he has been in office, according to a Wall Street Journal review of the president's travel.

**"Of the more than 100 days Mr. Trump has visited one of his properties** , he spent nearly 40 at his golf course in Bedminster, N.J., which he visited for much of his two-week August vacation. And he spent 40 days at Mar-a-Lago, his luxury resort in Palm Beach, Fla., where he arrived Friday. ... 'George W. Bush went to his ranch in Crawford, Texas, a lot, but it's not like you could rent the bedroom next to his,' said Jordan Libowitz, a spokesman for the transparency advocacy group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington." <http://on.wsj.com/2kYD3yE>

-- **"Republicans knock holes in Affordable Care Act but don't demolish the law,"** by WaPo's Amy Goldstein: "Before Congress left Washington for the year, Republicans finally made good on their determination to knock big holes in the Affordable Care Act, crippling its requirement that most Americans carry health insurance and leaving insurers without billions of dollars in promised federal payments. At the same time, public support for the perennially controversial law has inched up to around its highest point in a half-dozen years.

**"Nearly 9 million people so far have signed up** for ACA health plans for 2018 during a foreshortened enrollment season, far surpassing expectations. This dual reality puts the sprawling ACA - prized domestic legacy of the Obama era, whipping post of the Trump administration - at a new precipice, with its long-term fate hinging on the November midterm elections certain to consume Washington once the new year begins. If Democrats win a majority in either chamber of Congress, the law would be protected; a GOP sweep could further embolden repeal attempts." <http://wapo.st/2DUeN8r>

-- **"Where's the party? No state dinner in Trump's first year,"** by AP's Darlene Superville: "Trump ... [is] the first president in almost a century to close his first year in office without welcoming a visiting counterpart to the U.S. with similar trappings. ... Not since Calvin Coolidge in the 1920s has a president ended his first year in office without hosting a foreign leader for a state visit, according to the White House Historical Association. ... Lyndon Johnson held 12 in 1964, his first full year in office after

President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963." <http://bit.ly/2C5A3rl>

-- **BOSTON GLOBE INTERACTIVE: "11 months, 1 president, 2,417 tweets"**

<http://bit.ly/2pBy8Za>

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**THE HIDDEN CABINET -- "Where is Trump's Cabinet? It's anybody's guess,"** by Emily Holden with contributions from 23 POLITICO colleagues: "The Cabinet members carrying out President Donald Trump's orders to shake up the federal government are doing so under an unusual layer of secrecy - often shielding their schedules from public view, keeping their travels under wraps and refusing to identify the people and groups they're meeting.

**"A POLITICO review of the practices of 17 Cabinet heads** found that at least seven routinely decline to release information on their planned schedules or travels -- information that was more widely available during the Obama and George W. Bush administrations. Three other departments -- Agriculture, Labor, Homeland Security and Education -- provide the secretaries' schedules only sporadically or with few details. The Treasury Department began releasing weekly schedules for Secretary Steven Mnuchin only in November.

**"In addition, at least seven Cabinet departments** don't release appointment calendars that would show, after the fact, who their leaders had met with, what they discussed and where they traveled - a potential violation of the Freedom of Information Act, which says agencies must make their records 'promptly available to any person.' At least two departments -- Education and the Environmental Protection Agency -- have released some of those details after activist groups sued them." <http://politi.co/2pBzCCH>

**INSIDE THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY -- THE DEBATE ON THE HORIZON --**

**"Impeachment debate divides Democrats as 2018 wave builds,"** by Kyle Cheney and Heather Caygle: "A tidal wave of liberal disdain for President Donald Trump may help deliver the House to Democrats in 2018. And if it does, the new majority will face an immediate, fateful choice: to pursue Trump's impeachment as the base demands, or to coax their allies away from the doomsday button.

**"[L]awmakers who recall the 1998 impeachment** of President Bill Clinton are wary of sparking a political backlash for appearing too eager to remove a president without buy-in from independents and even some Republicans. Their tallest task may be persuading fellow Democrats to cool their jets. How the party handles the explosive question of impeachment could determine whether its new majority is still standing two years later. 'Impeachment, it's not something you ought to welcome. It's not something you ought to be ready to -- it's not something you want,' said Rep. Jerry Nadler (D-N.Y.), who was

elected by his colleagues last week to be the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, the panel that handles impeachment matters. ...

**"I think a lot of the base would push strongly for impeachment.** I think many of us feel like the lines have been crossed,' said Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif.), who supports impeaching Trump." <http://politi.co/2DdSFou>

**2018 WATCH -- L.A. TIMES -- "White college grads' distaste for Trump hurt GOP in 2017. Will it flip control of Congress to Democrats in 2018?"** by Michael Finnegan in Summerlin, Nevada: "White college graduates in America's suburbs have turned hard against Republicans in elections around the country and threaten to upend the party's control of Congress in the 2018 midterm elections. Put off by Donald Trump's presidency, they have been shunning Republicans in congressional and state legislative contests. Their support was crucial in electing Democrats as governor in Virginia and U.S. senator in conservative Alabama.

**"Republican hopes for keeping control of the U.S. Senate next year** will hinge on affluent, mainly white suburbs like Summerlin, Nev., where Trump's unpopularity is weighing on GOP Sen. Dean Heller in his run for reelection. It's an open question whether the Republican Party - encumbered by Trump's often racially charged cultural appeals to blue-collar voters - has repelled well-educated whites for the long term." <http://lat.ms/2DeSObe>

#### **SALT LAKE TRIBUNE EDITORIAL BOARD TO HATCH: CALL IT QUILTS --**

"[P]erhaps the most significant move of Hatch's career is the one that should, if there is any justice, end it.

**"The last time the senator was up for re-election, in 2012,** he promised that it would be his last campaign. That was enough for many likely successors, of both parties, to stand down, to let the elder statesman have his victory tour and to prepare to run for an open seat in 2018. Clearly, it was a lie. Over the years, Hatch stared down a generation or two of highly qualified political leaders who were fully qualified to take his place, Hatch is now moving to run for another term -- it would be his eighth -- in the Senate.

**"Once again, Hatch has moved to freeze the field to make it nigh** unto impossible for any number of would-be senators to so much as mount a credible challenge. That's not only not fair to all of those who were passed over. It is basically a theft from the Utah electorate. ...

**"Common is the repetition of the catchphrase that Hatch successfully** used to push aside three-term Sen. Frank Moss in this first election in, egad, 1976. 'What do you call a senator who's served in office for 18 years? You call him home.' Less well known is a bit of advice Hatch gave to Capitol Hill interns in 1983. 'You should not fall in love with D.C.' he admonished them. 'Elected politicians shouldn't stay here too long.' If only he had listened to his own advice." <http://bit.ly/2BDzKTQ>

**DEPT. OF NOT RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT -- NEW ISAAC DOVERE "OFF MESSAGE":** "Dovere speaks to Bill de Blasio in Des Moines for the latest 'Off Message' on the paradox of just being reelected easily as the mayor of the biggest city in America, but still not being taken seriously by progressives and Democrats as he tries for a national role. Is he running for president? 'No.' 'There's a lot of people in the political media and the political class who can only think through the prism of elections and only the very next elections, rather than understanding that social change is made in a variety of fashions. It's the electoral process. It's what happens at the local level as well as the national level. It is through issue-organizing,' de Blasio argued.

**"On people who dismiss his latest effort because he's flopped before:** 'banal and simplistic': 'I want to talk to anyone who thinks that and tell them they need to start thinking more. I mean, give me a break. So every time someone tries something and it doesn't work, it invalidates anything else they might do going forward? Tell Thomas Edison that, and Henry Ford, tell Mahatma Gandhi. How many people fell on their faces along the way trying things, experimenting with things, had setbacks? There's no leader who hasn't had setbacks.' On saying Hillary Clinton had a problem with her base: 'But I was right!' Plus, his assessment on whether Andrew Cuomo and Kirsten Gillibrand have progressive credentials to satisfy him." <http://politi.co/2lcS0wh>

**HAPPENING ONLINE -- "Kremlin trolls burned across the Internet as Washington debated options,"** by WaPo's Adam Entous, Ellen Nakashima and Greg Jaffe: "[H.R.] McMaster and Tom Bossert, Trump's homeland security adviser, both laid claim to controlling the cyber-portfolio and would sometimes issue conflicting instructions that left policymakers and intelligence officials confused about whose direction to follow.

**"Obama's 11th-hour actions had cleared the way for spy agencies** to conduct cyber-operations to counter the Russian threat. But the CIA still had to finalize the plans, and the Trump White House wanted to review them. Bossert was more cautious than McMaster about using cyber-tools offensively. His message to the National Security Council staff, a senior White House official said, was: 'We have to do our homework. Everybody needs to slow down.'" <http://wapo.st/2kYNPEZ>

## Playbook Reads

**PHOTO DU JOUR:** Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny (center), who submitted endorsement papers necessary for his registration as a presidential candidate, heads to a meeting in Russia's Central Election commission in Moscow on Dec. 25. Russian election officials have formally barred Navalny from running for president. | Evgeny Feldman/Navalny Campaign via AP

**CLICKER - "POLITICO's Best Photos of 2017:** POLITICO photographers M. Scott Mahaskey and John Shinkle pick their best of the year, from California to Capitol Hill." **20 keepers** <http://politi.co/2lb2pIW>

**WHAT SHKRELI IS READING -- "Cancer Drug Price Rises 1,400% With No Generic to Challenge It,"** by WSJ's Peter Loftus: "Since 2013, the price of a 40-year-old, off-patent cancer drug in the U.S. has risen 1,400%, putting the life-extending medicine out of reach for some patients.

**"Introduced in 1976 to treat brain tumors and Hodgkin lymphoma,** lomustine has no generic competition, giving seller NextSource Biotechnology LLC significant pricing power. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is seeking to encourage more competition for drugs like lomustine, one of at least 319 drugs for which U.S. patents have expired but which have no generic copies, according to a list the agency published earlier this month. The FDA says it will speed up review of any applications to market generic copies of the drugs on its list." <http://on.wsj.com/2DRQ1Wz>

**THE NEXT FRONTIER -- "Universities fear a violent 2018,"** by Kimberly Hefling: "After a year marked by campus confrontations between white nationalists and anti-fascist extremists, university administrators are preparing for a combative and potentially violent 2018 by beefing up security and examining the boundaries of their own commitment to free speech. Administrators at many campuses told POLITICO that they are struggling to balance their commitment to free speech - which has been challenged by alt-right supporters of President Donald Trump - with campus safety, as both white nationalists and left-wing provocateurs vowed to continue the types of confrontations that led to violence in Berkeley, California, and Charlottesville, Virginia.

**"Meanwhile, Richard Spencer, the white-nationalist leader** who organized free-speech rallies on many other campuses, told POLITICO that he plans to take his movement to more universities in 2018. He said he knows of efforts underway on at least seven campuses to get him to speak, and that he will use the full extent of the law to fight back against any universities that try to block him." <http://politi.co/2pBV6PJ> ... **Photo essay by M. Scott Mahaskey** <http://politi.co/2DRz2nk>

**SEVEN YEARS LATER ... "Regulators Propose Rollbacks to Offshore Drilling Safety Measures,"** by WSJ's Ted Mann: "Regulators in the Trump administration are proposing to roll back safety measures put in place after the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, a revision that would reduce the role of government in offshore oil production and return more responsibility to private companies. ... While industry would get much of what it has sought, BSEE is proposing leaving in place a standard for how much pressure drillers must be maintain atop a well to prevent a blowout. At the same time, the word 'safe' would be deleted from that section of the rule, on the basis that regulators could exceed their authority in interpreting the term in a way to withhold certain drilling permits." <http://on.wsj.com/2kZsz1J>

**BUSINESS BURST -- "Goodbye, George Bailey: Decline of Rural Lending Crimps Small-Town Business: Banks are closing branches and paring credit in rural America, focusing instead on booming urban markets; it's 'like a death sentence,'"** by WSJ's Ruth Simon and Coulter Jones in Roxobel, N.C.: "In-person banking, crucial to many small

businesses, is disappearing as banks consolidate and close rural branches. Bigger banks have been swallowing community banks and gravitating toward the business of making larger loans. ... Of America's 1,980 rural counties, 625 don't have a locally owned community bank -- double the number in 1994, federal data show. At least 35 counties have no bank, while about 115 are now served by just one branch."

<http://on.wsj.com/2C7hjlA>

**PLAYBOOK TRAVEL SECTION -- "Airlines' Rising Costs Threaten to Drag on Their Profit Margins,"** by WSJ's Susan Carey: "Airlines are paying more for fuel, labor and maintenance, drawing scrutiny from investors who fear the industry's rising costs threaten margins during a record stretch of profitability. Expenses at the nine largest airlines rose 8.1% in the first nine months of 2017 compared with the prior-year period, according to the Airlines for America trade group, while revenue rose 3.8%. The run-up in expenses is well above the overall U.S. inflation rate of 2.2%. The imbalance caused the pretax margins of the nine carriers to slide to 12% in the nine-month period from 15.5% the year before." <http://on.wsj.com/2BRwjNA>

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**MEDIAWATCH - PAGE SIX: "NBC tightens sexual harassment rules following Matt Lauer mess":** "NBC has issued strict new anti-sexual harassment rules to employees - including that staffers must snitch on any misbehaving colleagues - in the wake of the firing of disgraced 'Today' show ex-host Matt Lauer. A source tells Page Six that NBC employees have been ordered to report any inappropriate relationships in the workplace - and if they fail to do so, they could be fired for covering up for colleagues. Detailed rules also have been issued about conduct in the office, including how to socialize and even how to hug colleagues.

**"A source says, '... Staffers have been told** that if they find out about any affairs, romances, inappropriate relationships or behavior in the office, they have to report it to human resources, their superior or the company anti-harassment phone line. Staffers are shocked that they are now expected to snitch on their friends. Plus, there's been a series of ridiculous rules issued on other office conduct. One rule relates to hugging. If you wish to hug a colleague, you have to do a quick hug, then an immediate release, and step away to avoid body contact. Also there's strict rules about socializing, including [not] sharing taxis home and [not] taking vegans to steakhouses."

<http://pge.sx/2C618e2>

**DAVID BROOKS, "The 2017 Sidney Awards, Part I":** "[T]he first Sidney goes to Thomas Golianopoulos's essay '[Expletive] That Gator' from BuzzFeed ... is really an engaging description of a slice of American life that, when it is described at all, is usually

done so in a patronizing anthropological manner. ... Christopher Caldwell's essay 'American Carnage' in First Things [is] ... one of the most comprehensive depictions of the opioid crisis. ... Alex Tizon's 'My Family's Slave' in The Atlantic occupied readers' time more than any other piece of English-language journalism on the internet this year.

...

**"The other monster essay is Ronan Farrow's portrait** of Harvey Weinstein's victims in The New Yorker that, together with Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey's work for The Times, sparked this national re-norming. ... I can't stop telling people about the factoids I learned from Amia Srinivasan's book review essay 'The Sucker, the Sucker!' in The London Review of Books about the personality of octopuses. ... Lastly, Gary Saul Morson's essay 'Solzhenitsyn's Cathedrals' in The New Criterion takes us back to one of the greatest minds of the 20th century." <http://nyti.ms/2CbJrMA>

## Playbookers

**BIRTHWEEK (was yesterday):** Amanda Munger (DeGroff), senior account executive at Melwood Global and an Obama DHS and Interior alum

**BIRTHDAY OF THE DAY: Jared Bernstein**, senior fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and a Biden alum. **A trend he thinks deserves more attention:** "I think neither U.S. nor European economies are even close to ready to offset the next recession, especially if it's of any significant depth. To be clear, neither I nor anyone else knows when it's coming, but I fear that advanced economies will have too little fiscal and monetary space for fight it when it arrives. Relatedly, here in the U.S. we're quietly over-deregulating financial markets, which always leads to nasty asset bubbles." **Read his Playbook Plus Q&A:** <http://politi.co/2BCUpYf>

**BIRTHDAYS:** Candy Crowley ... Jonathan Rath Hoffman, DHS assistant secretary of public affairs and the pride of Greenville, South Carolina (hat tips: Lauren Claffey, filing from Breckenridge and Ed Cash, filing from Winthrop, Massachusetts) ... Mary Blanche Hankey, chief of staff for DOJ's office of legislative affairs (h/t Stephen Boyd) ... Katie Fallon, Hilton's global head of corporate affairs ... Mike Hammer, career diplomat currently serving as acting SVP of the National Defense University, former Ambassador to Chile, former Special Assistant to the President at the NSC, and Hoya for life (hat tip: Ben Chang) ... Noelle Clemente, VP at S-3 Public Affairs (h/t Amos Snead) ... Eloy Martinez, senior director of gov't relations at the American Gaming Association ... Andrew Weber ... Noa Meyer ... former Sen. Evan Bayh (D-Ind.) is 62 ... David Sedaris is 61 ... Kristin Davison ... Scott Shepard ... former California Gov. Gray Davis is 75 (h/t Dan Harrison) ... Ed Greelegs ... Alex Zuckerman, associate producer at CBSN ...

... **Joe Maloney**, partner at Locust Street Group, is 38 (h/ts Ben Jenkins and Allison Schneider) ... Alison Moore ... Emily Cyr, producer for "The Five" on Fox News, celebrating in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania (h/t Eileen Dombrowski) ... Edelman's Peter

Segall, Synim Rivers and William Gordon ... Amelia Colton ... Sally Fox, press secretary for Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.), is 23 (h/ts Kyle Egan and Laura Wiley) ... Jeff Quinton ... Matt Neufeld is 56 ... Jeremy Broggi ... Cole Henry is 31 ... Charlie Summers is 58 ... Politico Europe's Clémence Vatieur ... Rob Pyron ... Georgiana Cavendish, who works for the Deputy Secretary of State and got married in the Roman Forum in Italy this September -- **pic** <http://bit.ly/2BDgohA> (hubby tip: Jason Meininger) ... Joe Mosby ... Jane Song ... Ellen Field ... Natasha Walsh ... Will Heyniger is 55 ... Dave Nieuwstraten ... Jennifer Duck, Democratic staff director for Senate Judiciary ... Sarada Peri ... Matthew Verghese ... Scott Lear ... Joe Deoudes ... Jill Cooper Udall ... Holly Shannon ... Jon Henke ... Bishop Garrison of Sentinel Strategy & Policy Consulting ... Dillan Siegler ... Ian Duncan ... Ashley Dominguez ... Kate Hunter ... Courtney Carrow ... Caroll Spinney ... Ron Parker (h/t Teresa Vilmain)

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From "how to watch the eclipse" and "how to shoot like Curry," to "how to move forward" and "how to make a difference," here's to this Year in Search. Watch the film and see top trending lists from around the world at [g.co/2017](http://g.co/2017). \*\*\*\*\*

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